

Don't let RIAA, MPAA Comcast increase ISP bills

The state of the U.S. corporate music industry has been in decline ever since the original Napster launched and started the peer to peer networking phenomenon of file sharing which the RIAA calls illegal and music piracy. The MPAA has its problems with file sharers too when videos are exchanged online freely among users of a file sharing website or software client that works with services like Bit Torrent.

The RIAA has tried imposing DRM on what it calls legal music downloads when you use a download service/store like Apple's iTunes Music Store to buy or download video to allegedly try and curb digital piracy. They have also tried in some cases adding DRM to music CDs (for the most part examples of the Sony BMG music CDs that were infected with a DRM led to a fiasco because they contained root kits or malicious viruses, adware, spyware etc that harms a computer) that for the most part have also failed. Now the RIAA is starting to back down from DRM. EMI a RIAA label is already selling music on iTunes in the unprotected, higher quality format known as iTunes Plus via the same iTunes Store that also sells copy protected music.

The RIAA is also selling its music DRM free on Amazon MP3 and other legal download stores. They have tried suing the file sharing websites and failed. Now they are trying to sue individuals who use file sharing websites to share their music collection with others. By the way piracy in the U.S. is nowhere near as bad as it is in countries like India and China where there are even a lot more bootlegged copies of media on CD and DVD than the U.S. There supposed digital piracy is also prevalent.

The following is from an article about music extortion. The RIAA has done a lot of dirty under handed tricks and has been accused of things like racketeering and extortion. Some of these charges have been brought before a court before and sometimes been dismissed as the court ruled in favor of the RIAA. However, there are cases where the RIAA loses.

Here's the information from the article:

“The Music Industry's Extortion Scheme” by Ryan B.

<http://www.gather.com/viewArticle.jsp?articleId=281474977332500>

“What would you do if a bully kept calling him ‘Joey Giggles’ kept snatching your ice-cream cone? OK, now what if Joey Giggles then told you, ‘If you pay me five bucks a month, I'll stop snatching your ice cream.’ Depending on how much you hate getting beaten up, and how much you love ice-cream cones, you might decide that caving in is the way to go. This is what's called a protection racket. It's also potentially the new model for how we'll buy

and listen to music.

Let's back up for a second. The RIAA now has even suggested a tax be added to ISP bills for music downloads. Even if you don't allegedly steal music to make up their losses the RIAA wants every customer of Internet access to be charged \$5 extra (whether they download or not legally or illegally) for the privilege of being able to download if they choose to do so. Four companies (Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group, Sony BMG, and EMI) control a staggering 90 percent of all record sales in the United States, and they're hopping mad. CD sales are in free fall, and the recording industry's revenues have shrunk from \$15 billion to \$10 billion in less than a decade. Instead of blaming themselves for failing to embrace the Internet soon enough, Big Music has pointed the finger at piracy, shaking down scofflaw MP3 downloaders with capricious, multimillion-dollar lawsuits. This has not strengthened the record companies' position; at this point, they're losing money and everybody hates them.

Now Big Music is mulling the Joey Giggles approach. Warner Music Group is trying to rally the rest of the industry behind a plan to charge Internet service providers \$5 per customer per month, an amount that would be added to your Internet bill. In exchange, music lovers would get all the online tunes they want, meaning that anyone who spends more than \$60 a year on music will come out way ahead. Download whatever you want and pay nothing! No more DRM! Swap files to your heart's content! We promise, we won't sue you (or snatch your ice-cream cone)!

This is dirty and underhanded. Having all ISPs charge their customers \$5 extra and have that \$5 line the greedy RIAA and MPAA's pockets is wrong.

Just as it was wrong for Microsoft to not only bundle Internet Explorer with Windows to kill Netscape and pressure Apple to bundle the Mac version of IE Microsoft was making from 1997 till Netscape's browser business went bust (and the original browser war ended completely with no other browser than IE) at the time of the 1997 settlement between them and Apple so Microsoft could build up IE's market share and in an unlawful (illegal and immoral way) crush a competitor as it is now bundling more into Windows (like Windows Media Player, Windows Messenger or MSN Messenger, Windows Movie Maker, MSN Explorer browser) to do similar harm to others that it competes with in various markets and just as it was wrong for Apple to include its Safari web browser for Windows with the Apple Software Updater for Windows as an update for users who had not installed the browser before what the RIAA is doing is wrong. While Safari is still part of Software Updater on Windows its good that Apple added another category for new software and so it is not confused as an update for a user who has never installed it before but has iTunes, QuickTime and the Apple Software Updater application it is wrong for the RIAA to do this.

This amounts to extortion.

I am a proud supporter of www.downhillbattle.org which seems to be having some server problems lately and its site is coming back online and then going offline for a while.

Downhill Battle supports music activism and fights against the RIAA.